

Abstract 565

TITLE: Young Gay/Bisexual African-American Men: HIV Seroprevalence and Risk Behaviors

AUTHORS: Shehan, DA; Freeman, AC; Kazda, MJ (University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas)

BACKGROUND/OBJECTIVES: Where data are available, higher HIV infection rates have been observed among young African-American gay and bisexual men. HIV seroprevalence and risk behaviors among this hard-to-reach group are difficult to assess outside of STD clinics or counseling and testing settings. To address this need a community-based survey was developed.

METHODS: The Young Men's Survey (YMS) completed data collection in two phases from May 1994 through November 1997. Men ages 15-22 were recruited from a variety of public venues and interviewed in a recreational vehicle. Respondents were tested for HIV, hepatitis B, and syphilis and participated an extensive survey that included a risk behavior and drug use inventory and various psychosocial measures.

RESULTS: YMS recruited more than 650 sexually active men who have sex with men; 175 African American men were included in this analysis. The HIV seroprevalence rate for African Americans was 15% (Latino 8% and white 4%); hepatitis B infection was 16% and syphilis 3%. Of men reporting anal sex, 48% reported unprotected anal sex within the past 6 months. 70% of the respondents reported sex with females. Data presented will include HIV knowledge and perceived risk, drug use history, social environment and psychosocial information.

CONCLUSIONS: Rates of HIV infection differed significantly by race/ethnicity and reports of unprotected anal sex were disturbingly high for men who reached sexual maturity with the era of HIV. These young men demonstrated a high degree of safer sex understanding, but knowledge did not consistently translate into behavior change. Further behavioral research and tailored interventions are critical for these young men at high risk for HIV.

PRESENTER CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: Douglas A. Shehan

Address: 5834 Goodwin Ave.
Dallas, TX 75208

Telephone: (214) 944-1075

Fax: (214) 994-1061

E-mail: dsheha@mednet.swmed.edu